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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
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INFO ECOWAS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MONROVIA 000158

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: THIS, TOO, IS LIBERIA: FEBRUARY 3, 2010

11. (U) This round-up cable, named after a popular daily feature in a local newspaper, covers the following topics:

- U.S. Firm To Begin Drilling For Oil
- Donors Push Renewed Commitment to Kimberley Process
- USG Portfolio Review with the Government of Liberia (GOL)
- Ambassador and USAID Director Meet the Press
- Seabees Renovate Redemption Hospital
- Health Unit to Host Health Fair February 12
- Liberia To Host Africa-China-U.S. Trilateral Dialogue

12. (SBU) U.S. Firm To Begin Drilling For Oil: Houston-based Anadarko Petroleum Corporation representatives told Econoff January 29 that it hopes to build on its September 2009 oil discovery off the coast of Sierra Leone with plans to drill in Liberian water beginning August 2010. Anadarko has an interest in four of the seventeen concession blocks in Liberian coastal waters, in addition to its holdings in Sierra Leone and Ghana. Logistical support for the explorative endeavor will be provided through Cote d'Ivoire. However, in the coming months, Anadarko will transport 50 employees through Roberts International Airport (RIA) four times per week by private plane and helicopter. If large oil deposits are found, it will be nearly a decade before oil revenue flows to the GOL.

13. (U) Donors Push Renewed Commitment to Kimberley Process: After the UN Panel of Experts (POE) released its final, scathing report in December on Liberia's compliance with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) suggesting that Liberia has backtracked in areas such as internal controls and chain of custody requirements, the Ambassador and Special Representative to the Secretary General agreed to resurrect the Diamond Task Force (DTF) and insist upon monthly ministerial-level meetings. The DTF also reconstituted a working-level technical committee (including Econoff) that meets twice weekly to develop action plans to address the Kimberly Process Review Report and POE Report findings and implement recommendations. The DTF will meet for the second time later in February.

14. (U) USG Portfolio Review with the Government of Liberia (GOL): On January 20, 2010, the US Mission, including DOS, USAID, and DOD, led a full-day annual review of its assistance portfolio with GOL officials including four Ministers and four Deputy Ministers. The review featured past, present and future USAID programs, including their successes and challenges, in the Economic Growth, Democracy and Governance, GEMAP, and Health and Education sectors. DOD and INL presented the Peace and Security portfolio. Time was allotted

for the GOL reaction to each of the presentations which sparked some lively question and answer sessions. The Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs was so pleased with the review that he has instructed his ministry to use this model for the review of all aid portfolios.

15. (U) Ambassador and USAID Director Meet the Press: The Ambassador and USAID Mission Director briefed the press about economic growth assistance to Liberia on January 29. The Ambassador and Mission Director underscored the GOL's commitment to leading the process and the Embassy's focus on providing support. They called on the Liberian people to provide assistance to these endeavors as well. In their coverage, the press highlighted the Ambassador's remark that, "...there can be no economic growth without good governance and transparency. So all agencies of the USG support Liberia's efforts to stem corruption and ensure that this country's public resources are enjoyed by all." The press conference produced excellent media coverage, including an editorial by the Inquirer Newspaper.

16. (U) Seabees Renovate Redemption Hospital: The Ambassador performed the ribbon cutting/dedication ceremony on January 28 as a detachment of Navy Seabees completed the Redemption Hospital Health Care Annex project which involved building two children's wards and

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a laundry facility. Six Armed Forces of Liberia construction engineers received training working on the project with the Seabees. Redemption Hospital is the primary health care facility run by the Ministry of Health and was filled beyond its capacity. The ward was dedicated to Builder Third Class Joshua Carrell, a Seabee who died from malaria in December 2009.

17. (U) EMBASSY Health Unit to Host Health Fair February 12: The Health Unit in collaboration with USAID and Presidential Malaria Initiative (PMI) Partners will host their annual health fair on February 12. "Challenge Malaria," is the theme, because malaria is the leading cause of under-five deaths in Africa, and especially in Liberia. The health fair is designed to encourage staff and their families to challenge malaria by using prevention methods and approved medical intervention. Underscoring the need for malaria prevention are the recent deaths of a Navy Seabee and a Chinese scientist assigned to Cuttington Agriculture Research Institute, both of cerebral malaria.

18. (U) Liberia To Host Africa-China-U.S. Trilateral Dialogue: The Africa-China-U.S. Trilateral Dialogue plans to hold a meeting at the RLJ Kendeja Resort in Monrovia February 24-25. The two-day event, sponsored by the Leon H. Sullivan Foundation and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, will focus on corporate social responsibility. The U.S. and Chinese Ambassadors will both give opening remarks.

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